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**Strafford Policy Committee Meeting
September 21, 2012
Rochester Community Center, Rochester, NH
Minutes**

FINAL

SMPO Policy Members Present: Stephen Pesci (UNH), Kenn Ortmann (Rochester), Rad Nichols (COAST), Brian Tapscott (Somersworth), Glenn Davison (NHDOT), Victoria Parmele (Northwood), William Connor (Somersworth), Paul Lockwood (NHDES), Sandra Keans (Rochester), Robert Jaffin (Rochester), Carol Vita (Middleton) and Lou Vita (Middleton)

SMPO Staff Present: Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director) Marc Ambrosi (Transportation Planner) Dan Camara (Senior GIS/Transportation Analyst), Marilyn Barton (HR Specialist/Events Coordinator) and Greg Jones (Regional Planner),

1. Introductions

Chairman Vita opened the meeting at 9: 05 a.m. and asked for introductions around the room.

2. Staff Communications

G. Jones spoke about the Health Impact Assessment grant. G. Jones noted he attended an LGC workshop to learn more about it. He explained it is a grant that can be used to evaluate the potential health effects of a project or policy before it is built or implemented. He gave a handout with additional information about the grant and stated if any of the communities had a project to contact him. G. Jones stated the project deadline is no later than 5 PM on Friday, October 12, 2012 and Ben Frost was the contact.

3.1 Draft MPO Minutes of August 17, 2012

The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the MPO minutes of August 17, 2012. W. Connor made a motion and K. Ortmann seconded that motion. The Chairman asked if there were any changes or comments regarding the draft minutes. R. Nichols noted his name was listed as attended and noted he was not at that meeting and that Jeremy LaRose attended in his place. The motion was amended to approve the minutes with change as noted. It was noted there were two abstentions – R. Jaffin and S. Pesci, as they were not in attendance at that meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

4.1 Transportation Improvement Program update

M. Ambrosi reviewed the *Transportation Improvement Program* and highlighted changes in the document from the previous Policy meeting noting that significant progress had been made and we were now in the public comment period for the documents.

M. Ambrosi explained that through the Interagency Consultation process (in cooperation with EPA, FHWA, FTA, NHDOT, NHDES, & NH MPOs) planning assumptions were established in late August for conducting the financial constraint analysis for the *Transportation Improvement Program* and *Metropolitan Transportation Plan*. M. Ambrosi noted additionally, we were successful in resolving issues regarding the Air Quality Conformity determination.

With the planning assumptions Strafford MPO staff was able to complete the draft financial constraint for the *2013-2016 Transportation Improvement Program* and edit the text of the draft document. It was noted that staff had also completed the *Draft Strafford Air Quality Conformity Analysis & Determination*. M. Ambrosi reviewed the key items of the document and the 2013 funding table to illustrate financial constraint procedure used.

M. Ambrosi informed the committee that drafts of the documents were available on the Strafford Regional Planning Commission website at: www.Strafford.org. M. Ambrosi noted SRPC anticipates seeking TAC and Policy approval at our October Meetings.

A discussion ensued regarding acronyms included in the financial constraint portion of the *Transportation Improvement Program* document. It was noted that they should be spelled out in basic terms to make them more meaningful to the public. M. Ambrosi noted he was still working on comments received about the *Transportation Improvement Program* and would incorporate definitions of the acronyms in the final document. A question followed about the possibility of having hyperlinks in the digital version of the document that would connect readers directly to definitions. S. Pesci stated he thought a great job was done presenting the information in the document in a way that maximized transparency. S. Pesci asked if graphs could be made of the information for the financial constraint portion of the document to show Strafford Region funding levels visually, indicating that he thought this would further aid public understanding for the information in the *Transportation Improvement Program*.

4.2 Long-Range Transportation Program update

M. Ambrosi described the purpose of the the *Metropolitan (Long-Range) Transportation Plan* and reviewed a number of federal requirements pertaining to the *Metropolitan Transportation Plan*.

M. Ambrosi reviewed the process for updating the *Metropolitan Transportation Plan* project lists and indicated that a few project comments had been received from communities and the changes were reflected in the *Metropolitan Transportation Plan* project lists.

M. Ambrosi informed the committee that the *Long Range Transportation Plan* project list and financial constraint were available at the Strafford MPO website, www.strafford.org. M. Ambrosi noted that the full document would soon be available on the Strafford RPC website and noted staff is in the process of making final technical edits (primarily updating dates) to the document text.

M. Ambrosi finished the discussion about the *Metropolitan Transportation Plan* by noting the dates of the public comment period for the three documents that began on Monday, September 17, 2012 and will end at the close of business on Thursday, October 18, 2012. He also stated that the public is encouraged to offer comments prior to the end of the business day (5 PM) on Thursday, October 18, 2012 or at the public hearing on Friday, October 19, 2012.

4.3 Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century

C. Copeland gave an informative PowerPoint presentation about MAP-21. C. Copeland noted there is steady funding for the entire program and have authorization to proceed with work. It was noted COAST was awarded a grant this year for additional ADA vehicles as funding is for repair or replacement of aging equipment and facilities. C. Copeland noted there are new reporting requirements which include performance measures and planning and safety. C. Copeland went over the changes of the program.

W. Connor asked how the money was divided up. C. Copeland explained that the bus/facility and rural formula are the major grants.

C. Copeland noted that the US Department of Transportation has released two sites where people can discuss their ideas and thoughts and encouraged all to go to the US DOT website as it is a great way to see what is going on and what people are thinking. K. Ortmann asked that the links to the sites be put in the SRPC newsletter and on the SRPC website.

4.4 Intelligent Transportation Systems update

D. Camara noted the document was approved at the last Policy Committee meeting in July 2012. D. Camara stated in order to keep the ITS documents relevant and accurate the MPO staff is proposing the following: Allow for new projects to be added to the Strategic Plan at any time pending approval from TAC and Policy. Rockingham Planning Commission may also want to comment on any projects that might affect their region as these two documents are shared between our two regions. ITS project updates would be presented twice per year by MPO staff; one in January and one in June. These particular months would allow for a summertime construction update as well as an end of construction season update. Education opportunities would be explored in order for MPO staff and its committees to make more informed decisions concerning ITS. The opportunities would be presented at either the June or January meetings. V. Parmele asked if MPO staff would go to communities to educate them on this. D. Camara stated yes if there was interest and would begin with the TAC and Policy Committees and then focus at the community level. A discussion ensued about concerns about the additional workload a public comment website would create. It was noted that most people can't attend meetings and there should be some way to allow input from people that is easily available. It was also noted that those Policy Committee members attending the meetings should be sharing the information to their communities and is important to be prepared for the meetings.

5. Project Updates

M. Ambrosi stated he had attended the AMPO conference in New York last week and learned more about public outreach software and would send out information about that. M. Ambrosi noted at the last meeting there was discussion about the closing of the Whittier Street Bridge in Dover and then it was suddenly reopened and wondered if anyone knew why it reopened so quickly? K. Ortmann gave an update on the Sky Haven project; he noted funding is available and is required to be in the TIP and is scheduled for FY 2015-2016.

6. Other Business

M. Barton reminded those Commissioners in attendance at the meeting there was an upcoming Commissioners meeting on Thursday, September 27, 2012 at 7 PM at the Rochester Community Center and would be in touch shortly. There was no other business.

7. Citizen's Forum

There were no comments from the public.

8. Adjournment

The Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 a.m. B. Tapscott made a motion and K. Ortmann seconded that motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Minutes submitted by,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marilyn Barton PHR". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Marilyn Barton, PHR
Recording Secretary